

the sovereignty of the islands would undoubtedly have passed to the Emperor of Germany, and thereby the safety of American interests, not only in the Caribbean sea, but the Isthmus of Panama, would have been in jeopardy. The harbor of St. Thomas affords a wonderful refuge for shipping of all kinds. For centuries it was a port of call for practically all vessels plying between ports of the United States and those of South America. Millions of tons of coal were transferred from the docks at St. Thomas to coal-burning steamers in the South American trade, but the substitution of oil for coal as the steam maker, the World War and frequent droughts have curtailed the activities of the island. The falling off in the sugar industry and the consequent depletion have set the islands back. In 1835 the total population of the islands was 43,178. In 1917, when the first American census was taken, it showed a falling off of more than forty per cent, the total being in that year 26,501. Of these, 19,523 were reported as negroes, 4,553 mixed, 1,922 white and fortythree of other color.

#### Commercial Development.

The Virgin Islands are primarily a military asset to the United States, but the opportunity for commercial development exists, and when the United States gets down to business other than the investigation of oil leases, film flight problems and similar affairs which seem to be occupying the entire attention of Congress at present, these islands may receive the attention to which they are entitled.

#### The People Desirous

In the meantime the people there are praying that this millennium may not be long delayed. And it may be said that of the eighty odd newspaper editors and proprietors who visited the islands with Secretary Denby's party, seventyfive per cent, of these cordially endorse the prayer of the people of the Virgins.

### TELEGRAMS.

#### ST. CROIX STATION.

Paris, April 4th. — The Prince of Wales, after a 24 hour visit to Paris left yesterday for Biarritz, to the great relief of the secret police entrusted with the task of keeping discreet watch over the safety of the royal visitor in France. The Prince fooled detectives and reporters yesterday morning. A huge automobile bearing the coat of arms of the British Embassy remained standing in front of his hotel until noon. As the Prince had not appeared, the detectives were much worried. Afternoon newspapers published photographs of the automobile, with the caption "The Prince of Wales the latest riser in Paris." Meantime he had escaped through the rear entrance of the hotel and lunched democratically in a modest restaurant near the Boulevards with a former interpreter

who was attached to the British army during the war.

Dublin, April 4th.—President Cosgrave announced yesterday that Judge Richard Meredith, Gerald Fitzgibbons exmember of the Dail for Trinity College, and Patrick McGilligan, now Minister of Commerce had been appointed a committee of inquiry into the recent army mutiny and would be assisted by Mr. Daniel Gorey, nominated by the Farmers Party, and Major Bryan Cooper, selected by the Independent Party. The Labour Party refused to nominate a representative on the ground that the committee ought to be limited to members of the Dail who, through the executive, were ultimately responsible for the army department against which charges of muddling and incompetence have been made. Mr. Richard Mulcahy asked that the committee take evidence under oath, but President Cosgrave said that no legal power existed for the committee to take sworn evidence or compel the attendance of witnesses. Mr. Mulcahy and several other members complained of the "scandalous" treatment of officers who had served the Free State against the Irregulars and declared that the officers would refuse to attend the inquiry and would leave the Government to extricate itself from the situation as best it could.

Paris, April 4th.—For the second time within 24 hours M. Poincare's Government was today sustained by a vote of confidence in the Chamber of Deputies, 327 to 201. The vote came in the course of a discussion of the Pensions Bill, which caused the downfall of the Premier's previous cabinet last week. Amid scenes of the greatest agitation the new Finance Minister, M. Marsal adopted a stand exactly similar to the attitude taken by M. Delasteyrie, his predecessor in the portfolio. M. Marsal refused to compromise in the face of last week's adverse vote and staked the question of confidence on a matter of detail.

London, April 4th.—General support was given in the House of Commons today to Mrs. Wintringham's guardianship of infants bill, which was read a second time. The bill provides that the mother of every legitimate infant shall be a guardian jointly with the father and have equal authority, right and responsibilities. Mrs. Wintringham stressed the present unfair position of married women, compared with unmarried mothers or wives who are separated from their husbands, with respect to the custody of their children.

Buenos Aires, April 4th.—Two Argentine navy aviators met their death today when the hydro aeroplane in which they were flying fell into the bay off the naval aviators school at Puerto Belgrano.

London, April 4th.—This Government is the most travelled Ministry Great Britain ever possessed declared Mr. Sydney Webb, President of the Board

of Trade at an Australian gathering here in connection with the British Exhibition. "Six out of 20 Ministers have been in Australia, Mr. Webb continued and not merely as tourists either.

London, April 5th.—Cambridge won the 77th annual boat race against Oxford, over the four and a quarter mile course on the Thames this afternoon. The race, one of England's greatest sport classics, was witnessed by a crowd of more than one hundred thousand spectators, who lined both sides of the river from Putney to Mortlake. Cambridge won by 11.2 lengths. The official time was 18 minutes 41 seconds.

Corfu, April 5th.—Spare parts necessary for the repair to the world girdling plane arrived today from London and Major MacLaren announced that the big machine would be ready to take the air again in a few hours, and said he hoped to take off for Athens either today or tomorrow.

Seattle, W.N. April 5th.—The United States Army world fliers were returning to the dock at Sand Point at 8.45 a. m. today, after attempting a start over Lake Washington. It is reported that motor trouble had been encountered and that the start would be delayed temporarily.

London, April 5th.—Speaking at Glasgow yesterday the Minister of Health, Mr. John Weatley, said that if the country had really been startled by such proposals as were contained in the recent evictions bill, "God help their tranquility in the days to come," for when a labour majority appeared in the House of Commons, it would alter the whole social question.

London, April 5th.—Severe earthquake shocks occurred last night in the Derbyshire coalfields and in the neighbourhood of Alfreton. Shocks were first noticed at about 11 o'clock and were more violent than any of those experienced early in March, when the earth disturbances were first noticed. Many buildings were shaken and windows vibrated loudly. The oscillations were accompanied by dull uncanny noises, similar to those produced by heavy lorries running in a quiet street or a train in a tunnel. The vibrations were distinctly felt in the mines. To the north of Alfreton the shocks were equally marked and the people ran into the streets in alarm. Apparently little damage was done, although shaking of strata in the colliery workings has caused some anxiety.

Port Sudan, Egypt April 5th.—The British submarine K26 has blown up the steamer Fragestan, the cotton cargo of which caught fire in the Red Sea on Wednesday morning; threatening the lives of 1,200 passengers, who; however, were taken off by vessels summoned by wireless. As the Fragestan was sent to the bottom, she was still blazing fiercely and ultimately would have been a total wreck.